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Africa Review Report on Waste Management

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I. Introduction

1. United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/Res.58/218 mandates United Nations regional commissions, in collaboration with the secretariat of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), regional and subregional organizations and bodies and regional offices of funds, programmes, international finance and trade institutions and other organizations of the United Nations system to organize multi-stakeholder Regional Implementation Meetings (RIMs) and provide regional inputs into the work of the CSD. In this context, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) has been organizing RIMs in collaboration with partner organizations since 2003.

2. RIM 2009, to be held in October 2009, under the auspices of the Sixth Session of the Committee on Food Security and Sustainable Development (CFSSD-6), is being organized in collaboration with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and other partners. RIM 2009 will deliberate on regional inputs into the Eighteenth Session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-18). It will review progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 (A21), the Programme for Further Implementation of Agenda 21 (PFIA21) and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) commitments relative to the thematic areas of transport, chemicals, waste management, mining, and a ten-Year framework of programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP).

Scope of the report

3. This summary report on waste management draws from the main report of the same prepared under the leadership of UNIDO as Africa's contribution to regional preparations for CSD-18. UNIDO prepared this summary as well as the main report in collaboration with the African Roundtable for Sustainable Consumption and Production (ARSCP) and the African National Cleaner Production Centres (NCPCs). The report provides an overview of trends and emerging issues on waste management in Africa. It highlights progress and achievements, identifies implementation challenges and constraints, as well as lessons learned; and outlines the way forward, including policy measures and action needed to accelerate implementation.

Submission to RIM 2009

4. Being submitted for consideration by RIM 2009, this report is intended to stimulate discussions aimed at generating inputs to inform the Africa RIM Statement. It is also intended to elicit comments and additional inputs for the finalization of the main regional review report on waste management. The final report will serve as a reference document for CSD-18 deliberations. It will be disseminated to member States, African regional and subregional organizations, and all relevant partners and organizations. The aim is to highlight the status of implementation of waste management-related commitments in Africa and serve as an advocacy tool for promoting appropriate action by all stakeholders at all levels, to ensure sound waste management in Africa.

15. Some countries have refurbishment centres for used ICT equipment which serve to extend the useful life of the products.

16. Resource-efficient and cleaner production has become a feasible best practice for reducing waste from businesses and other organizations in different parts of Africa and is now being promoted through channels like the network of UNIDO-UNEP affiliated National Cleaner Production Centres (NCPCs).

IV. Implementation challenges and constraints

17. The single largest implementation challenge remains creating sufficient capacity for environmentally sound management, including, where appropriate, recovery and recycling of various waste streams across Africa. The effort to do this is constrained by access to finance and technical know-how.

18.

24. *Refuse collection charges:* In some cities, a sound refuse collection system is in place and serves as a good source of income for city and municipal councils. It is necessary to exchange knowledge and experience in Africa on successful experiences, which can be replicated.

25. *Practical and attitudinal changes:* The manner in which solid waste was previously managed has changed. For example, there are increasing signs of waste being segregated at source and to a large extent, collected and stored in waste bins. Sorting is being done at communal waste collection points with noticeably organized groups of people. Increasingly, peoples' attitude to solid waste is gradually changing; and they no longer regard solid waste as a menace but rather a commercial good that can be used to generate income and alleviate poverty.

26. *What Africa expects from the international community:* The international community should support transfer and dissemination of knowledge and technology and foster investments in best practices for environmentally sound management of various waste streams within the African continent. The scale of investments needed for proper sanitation and environmentally sound management of wastes is beyond the capacity of African countries.

27. The international community should implement the relevant international agreements/conventions on waste management (particularly the Bamako, Basel and Cotonou Conventions) and provide assistance to African countries to strengthen their national, human and institutional capacities for implementation and enforcement (especially for control of imports and exports of wastes and waste containing products into and within the region).

28. The international community should conclude, as a matter of urgency, the negotiations and ratification of a protocol on liability and compensation for dama